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WILDLIFE SERVICES—NEVADA

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USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in Nevada

Every day, residents, industries, organizations and agencies call on Nevada Wildlife Services (WS) for help in protecting agriculture, human health and safety, natural resources, and property from damage or threats posed by wildlife. WS' professional wildlife biologists respond to these requests with effective, selective, and humane strategies to resolve wildlife conflicts. WS works in cooperation with the Nevada Department of Agriculture's Division of Resource Protection and in close collaboration with the Nevada Department of Wildlife.



Top 5 Major Assistance Activities:

- Protecting livestock from predators
- Protecting native wildlife (including endangered species) from excessive predation
- Protecting public health and safety and property in urban areas
- Protecting property, crops, and livestock from bird damage
- Managing wildlife hazards to aviation

Top 5 WS Research Projects of Interest to Nevada:

- Reducing wildlife hazards to aviation
- Evaluating waterfowl as disease, parasite, and noxious weed reservoirs
- Managing predation through new methods to protect livestock and wildlife
- Evaluating impacts of common raven depredation on sage grouse
- Controlling wildlife vectors of disease

Applying Science & Expertise to Wildlife Challenges

WS offers information, advice, equipment, and materials that enable many people to resolve wildlife conflicts on their own. Often, this *technical assistance* can be provided over the phone. WS also provides on-site expertise, or *direct assistance*, to manage complex wildlife problems that cannot be safely resolved by others. To support this effort, WS conducts *scientific research* across the Nation to develop answers to new problems posed by wildlife and to ensure the program benefits from the latest science and technology.

Protecting Agricultural Resources—

Nevada's sheep industry is ranked twenty-first in the nation. The vast majority of Nevada's sheep are grazed on the grand expanses of the open range, with an absence

of pens, sheds, and fences, where they are especially vulnerable to predation. Predators are the number one cause of losses to the sheep industry, inflicting more damage than disease or inclement weather. Research suggests that these losses would be two to three times higher in the absence of a livestock protection program.

By working with individual livestock producers, public land managers and State agriculture and wildlife agencies, WS tries to stop or minimize livestock losses while having a minimal impact on predator populations. Mountain lion damage management occurs when losses are confirmed and predicted to continue if no action is taken. Coyotes, the most significant predator of sheep and calves, are managed when damage has occurred in the past and is expected to continue.

WS' research arm, the National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC), conducts an extensive program of research and methods development to reduce and prevent wildlife predation on sheep and cattle. Studies are underway to develop more effective, less injurious coyote capture systems, and improved electronic frightening devices.

Protecting Health and Safety—Nevada is recognized as having sylvatic plague, the non-human form of plague, in its wild rodent populations. With 87 percent of Nevada's acreage being Federal lands open for public use, the incidence of plague in wild rodent populations is of critical interest to State and County health departments. In cooperation with various health departments and the Nevada Department of Agriculture's Animal Testing Laboratory, WS routinely takes blood samples from predators during routine wildlife damage management activities to test for the presence of plague titers. The results of these tests are provided to medical facilities throughout the State.

In addition to disease concerns, increasing incidences of bold, threatening, or biting coyotes have become routine in urban areas. Additionally, mountain lion numbers have increased to a point that lion sightings in urban areas are not uncommon. WS, in cooperation with Nevada Department of Wildlife and local police, works to ensure that human/wildlife conflict situations are addressed expeditiously.

Major Cooperators

- Nevada Department of Agriculture
- Nevada Department of Wildlife
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- U.S. Forest Service
- Clark County, Nevada
- Nevada BLM Grazing Boards

Protecting Human Health and Safety at Airports—Due to the limited availability of water and green vegetation outside of urban areas, Nevada routinely has large numbers of waterfowl concentrated within urban areas: Canada geese, mallards, and coots. The daily activities of these waterfowl, as they travel between food and water sources, frequently overlaps with airport properties or air travel corridors. This contact increases the threat of wildlife/aircraft collisions. WS, in cooperation with the Nevada Airport Authority, has conducted an annual urban goose round-up in the Truckee Meadows since 1987 to reduce this risk.

Protecting Natural Resources—Ordinarily, populations of predators and prey develop some static balance within the environment. Changes to the environment, however, caused by man or natural phenomenon, such as fires, can disrupt that balance so that one species suppresses another. Many endangered species are affected either by predation or competition from other, more successful wildlife species. Nevada, like many western states, has sparse mule deer populations despite an abundance of habitat. In some areas, mule deer numbers are not increasing rapidly enough to sustain population levels. In other parts of the State, predation has severely limited opportunities to restore wildlife populations such as the desert tortoise and bighorn sheep.

WS has responded to requests from State and Federal wildlife agencies to protect sage grouse, desert tortoise, Palmer's chipmunk, antelope, and bighorn sheep. In areas where mule deer herds are suffering excessive fawn predation, WS works with the Nevada Department of Wildlife to increase survival rates through selective coyote removal.

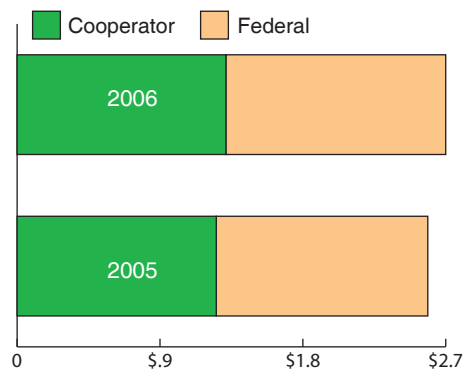
Looking to the Future

Nevada is the fastest growing state in the country. Increasing demands for wildlife damage management in Nevada have created a need to expand the urban program. At present, WS receives far more requests for assistance than it can successfully address. Projected population increases will certainly lead to more wildlife conflicts with people and even more requests for assistance.

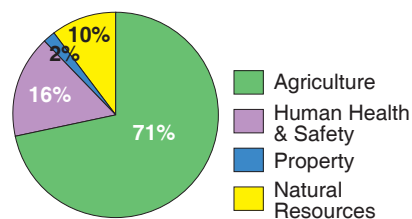
Nevada Wildlife Services Funding

In addition to receiving federally allocated funds, WS also receives money from cooperators who have a vested interest in the program: producers, private individuals, businesses, and other Federal, State, and local government agencies. In most cases, these cooperators need help to resolve wildlife damage problems or they play a role in wildlife damage management.

Total Funding (Millions)



Resources Protected % of Total Funds



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